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## **EIU Trustees to Consider Blair Hall Roofing Contract; Renovation to Begin**

*Sep-08-2004*

Almost five months have lapsed since Eastern Illinois University 's Blair Hall was nearly destroyed by fire. Following Friday's meeting of the EIU Board of Trustees, renovation of the historic structure will begin in earnest.

The meeting, scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. (Friday, Sept. 10) in the University Union's Grand Ballroom, is open to the public.

Trustees are expected to approve a contract with Grunloh Construction, Inc., of Effingham, allowing for the replacement of Blair Hall's fire-damaged roof. The \$845,600 price tag - to be reimbursed by the university's insurance carrier - includes all labor and material for the project, which includes new third-floor wall partitions, a roof structure and roofing material.

Blair Hall - the third oldest building on Eastern's campus - was a three-story, limestone masonry and wood structure. On April 28, 2004 , the academic building suffered extensive damage as the result of a mid-afternoon fire (the cause of which was later deemed an accident). The building was safely evacuated and no injuries were reported.

It was determined that the roof structure and the third floor of Blair Hall were destroyed, and that extensive water damage to the first and second floors would necessitate "gutting" those areas. The building's "shell," or exterior walls, the corridor flooring, the north and south stairwells and the structure's load-bearing walls were determined to be salvageable.

The decision was made to begin renovation with a new roof, thus providing protection from the elements as work progresses on the inner three floors. The roofing work under consideration would incorporate approximately 12,000 square feet of steep-slope roofing and 2,500 square feet of low-slope roofing, copper flashing and restoration of the existing lower limestone parapet coping.

As the roofing work commences, Ratio/SRA Architects of Champaign will continue its design work for Blair Hall's interior. It is expected that the work will be sent out for bids by the end of the year, with construction beginning shortly thereafter. An aggressive timetable has Blair Hall's displaced offices and departments (hopefully) moving back "home" by January 2006.

Currently, temporary office space has been assigned as follows:

- Department of Sociology/Anthropology -- Clinical Services, first floor
- Graduate School -- Clinical Services, second floor
- International Programs -- Clinical Services, second floor
- Grants and Research -- Clinical Services, second floor
- University Counsel -- Clinical Services, second floor
- Minority Affairs & Gateway Program -- Clinical Services, first floor
- School of Continuing Education -- 700 W. Lincoln
- African-American Studies -- Lawson Hall (rooms 313 and 314)

All telephone numbers and e-mail addresses remain the same.